

# Documents on Diplomacy: Resources

## Key Players: Section I, Revolutionary Era

**Adams, John** First United States Minister to England. Adams also served in the Continental Congress, on the Paris Peace Commission, and later as the second President of the United States.

**de Bonvouloir, Julien Achar** A secret agent of the French government in the United States in 1775, who met with Franklin and Jay. His account helped convince the French to aid the American rebels and convinced the Americans to send a representative to France.

**Count of Guines** French Ambassador in London who passed Bonvouloir's secret correspondence to the Comte de Vergennes.

**Comte de Vergennes** (Charles Gravier) The French Foreign Minister during the American Revolution. He convinced King Louis XVI to back the Americans. His title "Comte" is "Count" in English.

**Deane, Silas** A merchant and member of the Continental Congress who was selected as the first American representative in France, arriving in July 1776. Deane was hampered because he spoke no French.

**Duke of Richmond** (Charles Lennox) A British politician who strongly opposed Lord North's policy toward the American colonies. He believed that the actions of the rebellious colonists were "perfectly justifiable."

**Fox, Charles James** England's first Foreign Secretary, who was a supporter of the American colonists. In 1782, Fox believed that it was his job to negotiate an end to the War. He wanted to grant independence immediately and unconditionally.

**Franklin, Benjamin** America's preeminent diplomat, whose skills were key to gaining French support for American independence—and to negotiating a peace treaty with the British.

**Franklin, William Temple** Grandson of Benjamin Franklin. Known as Temple, he served as the secretary to the American delegation in Paris during the Revolutionary War.

**George III** King of England during the American Revolution. He was bitterly opposed to American independence, but willing to reconcile the two nations after the end of the War.

**Grenville, Thomas** Member of Parliament who opened peace negotiations with the Americans in 1782. Franklin called him "a sensible, judicious, intelligent, good tempered and well instructed young man."

**Hartley, David** A British statesman and scientist, who negotiated the Paris Peace Treaty and was one of its signers. He was a member of Parliament and a strong supporter of American independence.

**Jay, John** President of the Continental Congress, he was selected as the U.S. representative to Spain during the American Revolution. Jay signed the Paris Peace Treaty and served as Secretary of Foreign Affairs under the Articles of Confederation. Jay was a strong supporter of the proposed Federal Constitution and contributed to the *Federalist Papers*.

**Laurens, Henry** President of the Continental Congress, in 1780 he was chosen to negotiate a loan for the colonies in Holland. Captured at sea by the British, Laurens was imprisoned in the Tower of London, charged with high treason, for the duration of the War. After his release, he traveled to Paris and served as one of the American Peace Commissioners. Laurens signed the Paris Peace Treaty.

**Lee, Arthur** Unsuccessful in his attempts to win Spanish and Prussian support for the American cause, Lee later joined Franklin and Deane in Paris, where he helped negotiate the Treaty of Alliance. He did not approve of Franklin's lifestyle and succeeded in having Deane recalled.

*Lord Rockingham* (Charles Watson-Wentworth) He replaced Lord North as British Prime Minister in 1782. Rockingham immediately acknowledged American independence and sent unofficial advisors to Paris to open peace negotiations with Franklin. Rockingham died in office after only 14 weeks.

*Lord Shelburne* (William Petty-Fitzmaurice) Prime Minister after the death of Lord Rockingham in 1782. He lost his position due to intense opposition in England to the generous terms of the Paris Peace Treaty.

*Louis XVI* King of France during the American Revolution. His decision to provide material support and money to the Americans was key to their independence and also led to his own downfall. Louis XVI was executed in 1794 during the French Revolution.

*Marquis de Lafayette* (Marie John Paul Joseph Roche Yves Gilbert du Motier) French aristocrat who played a key role in the American army during the Revolution. Silas Deane recommended him to George Washington.

*Oswald, Richard* An acquaintance of Franklin's, he was a merchant and slave trader with extensive knowledge of American geography and society. He was sent by Lord Shelburne to begin peace negotiations with Franklin and later signed the Paris Peace Treaty.

*Paine, Thomas* Author of *Common Sense*, published in 1776. Paine's pamphlet captured the imagination of Americans and is widely credited with preparing the country for independence.

*Washington, George* Leader of the American forces during the Revolutionary War, he later served as the first president of the United States under the Constitution.

*West, Benjamin* An American painter of historical scenes who found great success in London. He painted the American peace commissioners in Paris (1783-84), but the British delegates failed to pose for him so the painting was never completed.